



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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November 9, 2016

FB16-076

NOAA Fisheries Announces the Gulf of Mexico Gray Triggerfish Recreational Season will Remain Closed Through the End of 2017

NOAA Fisheries announces that gray triggerfish recreational harvest will remain closed in the Gulf of Mexico for 2017, or until further notice. NOAA Fisheries has published a temporary rule modifying the gray triggerfish recreational annual catch target to zero pounds, and the annual catch limit to 19,987 pounds whole weight for 2017, due to an estimated 221,213-pound harvest overage during the 2016 recreational fishing season.

Gray triggerfish have an accountability measure associated with its harvest that requires the sector to payback any harvest overage during the next fishing season. In 2016, the Gulf of Mexico gray triggerfish recreational landings are estimated to be 422,436 pounds. The 2017 annual catch limit and annual catch target were scheduled to be 241,200 pounds and 217,100 pounds, respectively. The harvest overage will reduce the annual catch target to zero pounds, and the annual catch limit to 19,987 pounds. NOAA Fisheries is required to close the recreational sector when landings reach or are projected to reach the ACT. Therefore, recreational harvest of gray triggerfish in federal waters of the

Gulf of Mexico will be closed for 2017, or until further notice.

Gulf of Mexico gray triggerfish are currently overfished (population is too low), and under a rebuilding plan which expires at the end of 2017. The Gulf of Mexico of Mexico Fishery Management Council is currently working on Amendment 46 to the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan to establish a new gray triggerfish rebuilding plan, and modify management measures. A copy of Draft Amendment 46 can be found at the NOAA Fisheries website.

Electronic Copies of the temporary rule and supporting documents may be obtained from the NOAA Fisheries Web site: http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_fisheries/reef_fish/2017/am46_gray_trigger/index.html.

This bulletin serves as a Small Entity Compliance Guide, complying with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996.